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Songs of A Red Cross Nurse

Brookes More

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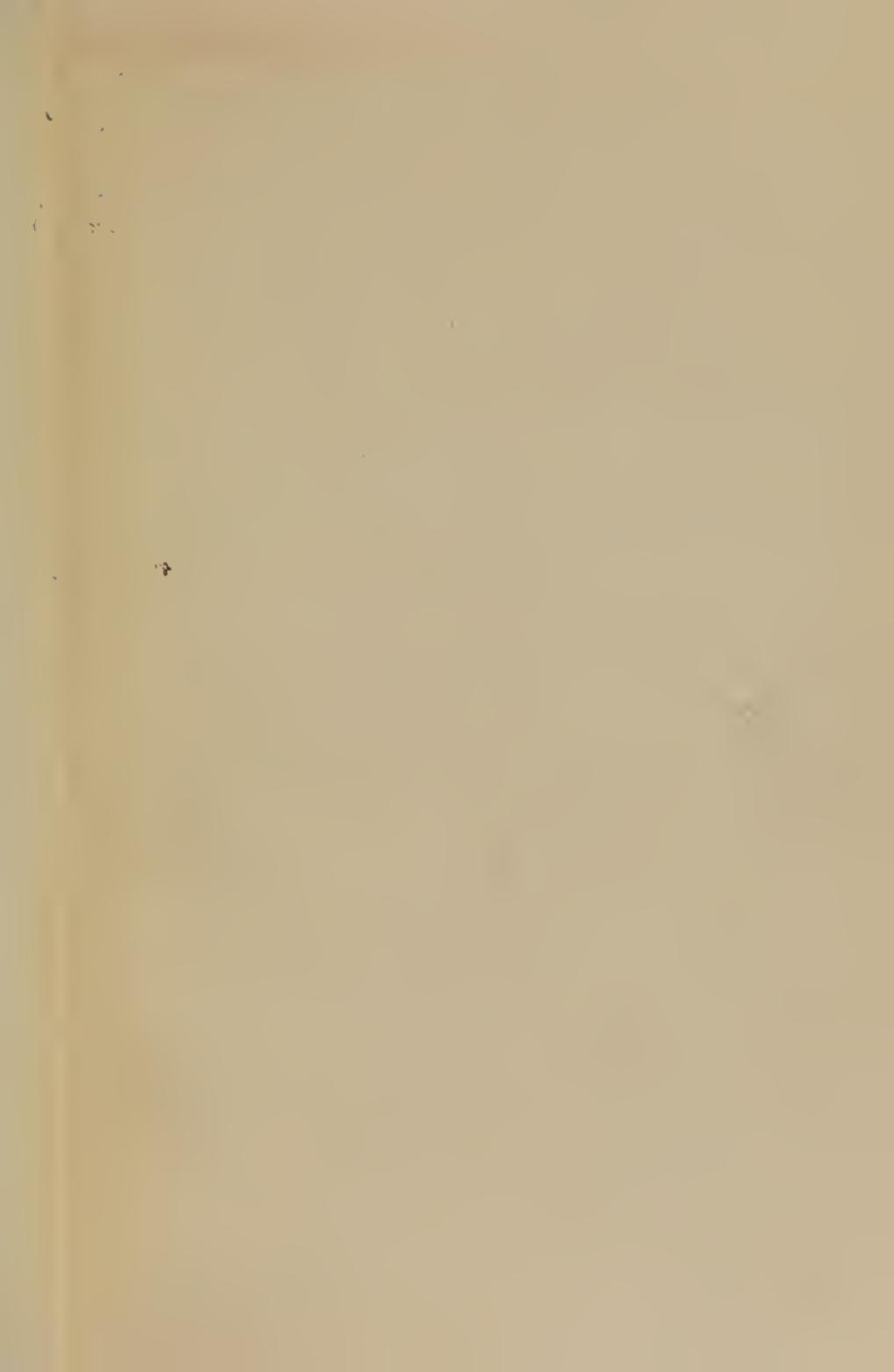
ANNEX

Section

No. 113,
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8-513



SONGS OF A RED CROSS NURSE



"Then Maggie looked daggers and scorned him."

Songs of a Red Cross Nurse

By BROOKES MORE



ILLUSTRATIONS BY T. J. MOYNAHAN

THE CORNHILL COMPANY

BOSTON

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TO SWEET MAGGIE—
MY OWN

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SWEET MAGGIE McGEE

SWEET MAGGIE McGEE

'Twas an elegant party he gave us,
And all of the officers went;
And I was that proud to be present
For three of his daughters had sent

A dignified note to me honour,
Which happened to be an invite;
“ Dear Phelim,
 Plaze come to our party
At eight o'clock Saturday night;

“ And it will be ‘officers strictly,’
Yourself we are waiting to see;
Now don’t disappoint us, dear Phelim,
 Yours truly,
 The Sisters McGee.”

You see, we were ordered to Europe,
For Ostend, Dunkirk or Calais,
And all must be ready by Sunday
To sail from Killala Bay.

And that was the reason a plenty
For revels and parties galore;
But the grandest of all, to my notion,
Was this of "The One Day Before."

An elegant party, a grand one,—
The next day, "Away to the war."—
Take a light to your pipe while I'm talking,
I'll tell it ye, Mickey O'More.—

Now Billy McGee had three daughters,
As pretty as they could well be,
Young ladies, Miss Bridget and Mary,
And sweet little Maggie McGee.

I'd called on the girls pretty often,
And loved by the light of the moon,
To wander with Bridget or Mary,
Whichever one wanted to spoon.

Of course, that left out little Maggie,
Because she was only sixteen;—
A wild little trick, and a spitfire—
Her ayqual ye never have seen.

“ Aw Phelim, ye’re after forgetting
The girl that I told you about ”—
“ Tut, Mickey your tongue interrupts me—
You grunt like a pig in his snout.”

The first one I met at the party
Was Bridget, and looking that swate,
My head was bamboozled entirely,
Sure was I, that girl was my fate.

We had the first dance, and together
Were thinking how soon we must part;—
I said to her, “ Bridget, tomorrow
I go, but I lave you me heart.”

“ Come out in the garden,” she whispered,
“ Faith, how can we talk in this crowd.”—
And there in the moonlight ’twas settled:
I felt like a peacock, — that proud.

So when we came back, there was Mary,
And Bridget said, “ Give her a dance; ”
And away we went whirling together,
It seemed I was lost in a trance.

“Ah Mary,” I said, “ ‘Tis a strange world;
I feel like it’s slipping away;
It leaves me behind while we’re dancing,
Tomorrow will be my last day.”

“Come out in the garden,” she whispered,
“I feel I will have a big cry.”
And out there my head went that foolish,
To hear the poor girl weep and sigh.

“Ah Mary,” says I, “You’re heartbroken
Because I am off to the war;
But listen, me darlint, I’ll tell you
A thing I have thought of before:

“ ‘Tis the praist that can help us, my Mary,
Your husband I am, if you’ll wait,”—
“Ah Phelim,” she sighed, “You’ll forget me,
The glory will make you so great.”

We argued that question ten minutes;
She swore she would always be true;
And when I went back to the dancing,
Sure, I was engaged to her, too.

SWEET MAGGIE McGEE

The first one we met in the parlour
Was sweet little Maggie McGee;
Says Mary, "O Phelim, there's Maggie,
Go dance with her, just to plaze me."

And soon we were dancing together—
I thought we were floating in air,
And I seemed in a dream for the perfume
That lurked in her beautiful hair.

Her eyes, looking up (just a little),
I saw in their wonderful blue
A light I had dreamed of in women—
Soft, innocent, perfect and true.

And the music? ah yes, and the music!
It breathed of a lover's soft pain;
And the sorrow that wafted around us
Was turning to pleasure again.

And there went the languishing beauties
In circles around and around;
And all of it mingled together,
Light, beauty, sweet perfume and sound.

I whispered, "Ah what is it? Dearie,
It is not the earth we are on;
And are you that sweet little Maggie,—
Or the wraith of her—after she's gone?"

She answered me not, but her fond eyes
Suffused with a liquid of pearl;
And all the wide world slipped away then,
Save only that one darling girl.

My brain was on fire, I was dizzy,
I was sick with excess of delight;
Ah, what if that girl should forget me
The moment I slipped from her sight?

I whispered, "My dear, I can't stand it;
Come out in the garden with me;
I never can rest till I've told you
What ails me, sweet Maggie McGee."

She looked up with something of wonder,
And something of knowledge I thought;
A man is so stupid and clumsy;
A girl by her nature is taught.

SWEET MAGGIE McGEE

A girl at sixteen may be artless,
But that is not always the case;—
Sweet Maggie demurely went with me,
But a dimple played rogue in her face.—

“ Aw Phelim O’Toole, what’s a Mormon
Compared wit’ the likes of your heart?
The devil is anxious to burn you—
I’m waiting to witness your start.”—

“ What, Mickey O’More, has occasioned
The nonsense and vapour ye give?
Just wait for the end o’ me story;
You’re jealous as sure as I live.”

“ Ah Maggie,” said I, “ ’Tis a wonder,
To see you so quiet and shy;
And me that’s on fire like a furnace
For love of you standing near by.

“ And the cause of it? Sure there’s a reason,
And who but your sweet self, my dear?
The good Lord was mad wit’ us poor men
That moment he put you down here.

“ I’m off of me feet, I am foolish;
The devil knows what I will say;
But the angel that’s in you must hear it
Before I can go on me way.

“ Now Bridget is ill for a brother,
And Mary feels awfully, too,
But before they can get such a present
They’ll first have to give away — you.

“ Ah Maggie, my colleen, forgive me,—
A wild man, clane out of his mind,—
So proud was I, now I’m that humble
Compared with you — gold, and refined.

“ But when I am off to that great war,
Where death works a strange Golden Rule,
And you hear of that terrible carnage,
Will you forget Phelim O’Toole?

“ ’Tis a wonderful thing, I assure you,
Great courage and love are true friends;
And I feel, if the good Lord will spare me,
That I may (before the war ends)

SWEET MAGGIE McGEE

“ Do something that you can be proud of;
I mean, if you care about me,
For now I am through with my boyhood
For the love of sweet Maggie McGee.

“ And Maggie, see, here is a plain ring,
The one that my mother once wore,
And I ask you to keep it because, dear,
No other girl — — never before

“ Have I had a thought to part with it,
And sure by that sign you will know
There is one girl for me, and one only,
Acushla, wherever I go.”

And my arm had (by accident may be)
Slipped 'round her,— ah sure it was chance;
But it gave me another sensation
Than the same in the whirl of the dance.

And while I was talking her eyes shone
Like stars on the waves of the Moy —
And as I leaned over I whispered,
“ My dearest, my darling, my joy.”

And our lips met (by accident may be)
But the moment the kissing was done,
Up Maggie flashed furious and slapped me,
And fled from me like a wild fawn.

At first I was rather astonished,
And angry — it made my cheek sting —
But when I reflected I noticed
She had not returned me that ring.

So, musing, I turned from the garden
And entered the ball room once more;
'Twas late and the guests had departed,
But Bridget stood by the front door.

We walked about ten feet together,
And there stood Miss Mary near by,
And always, her heart was that tender,
I thought she was ready to cry.

Then the three of us ambled to father,
With arms locked around them I wint;
And the moment he saw that performance
His eyes took a mischievous glint.



"Then the three of us ambled to father."

[page 12]

“ Dear father,” I said, “ Pretty Bridget
Has told me a sister I need,
And Mary assures me the same thing,
’Tis I am the brother indeed.”

Then both of the girls began laughing,
Each thought I had said the right thing;
And I was quite sure of that notion,
By right of one girl and the ring.

Then Daddy McGee said, “ You rascal,
To which of the girls have you lied.”
And I answered, “ Belave me the best one.” —
They laughed at that quite satisfied.

“ So that was the end of your party; ”
Chimed in little Mickey O’More. —
Be aisey Mike, I never told you
That I had gone out be the door.

Well — annyway — Mickey you guessed it;
I rambled away to the gate;
For sure I suspicioned that some one
Would hang around there, — on the wait.

But that little trick of wild nature
Would never do what you might think;—
The rest of the night, having missed her,
My wearied eyes slept not a wink.

The morning came up; bright and early,
The drum and fife stirred the crisp air;
And after we ate a good breakfast,
We packed up and started from there.

We marched down the main street in glory,
For all the town waved a farewell;
And here and there Johnny or Tommy
Broke ranks to kiss Kitty or Nell.

And what would you think of Miss Bridget,
So kind at the party last night!
She passed that same Phelim O'Toole, sir,
And hugged the lad just at his right.

“ Ah Jimmy Malone, you rap-scallion!
Whoever would think ye so sly?
I thought your Miss Bridget was my girl,
I see it was all in me eye.”

And what would you think of Miss Mary,
So ready and soft with her weep!
Ah Mickey, don't fail to raymimber
Thim kind of girls always is deep.

She passed me the same as Miss Bridget,
And held a big weep in her eyes,
But a lad on me left, Bill O'Brien,
Rewarded her sorrowful cries.

I looked on me right, there was Bridget
A-kissing of Jimmy Malone;
I looked on me left, and O'Brien
With Mary was wailing o'chone!

'Twas sad for me, I that neglected,
Forgot by the pretty McGees!
And where was a female for Phelim
To weep with, or kiss if you please?

Well, after the women had plenty
Of doings, that kind of a way,
With a cheer for the girls and a flourish
We marched out of old Ballina.

But sarrah the cheer would I join in,—
And all the boys laughed at me so,
I gnawed on me nails, and I growled out,
“The devil knows where you will go.”

Away we had marched then, a half mile,
While I was too grouchy to tell,
When out from the midst of a thicket
We heard the most terrible yell.

A screech and a yell, and betwixt them
I heard my name, “Phelim O’Toole!”
A screech then, “O Phelim!” a yell then,
I felt like a blithering fool.

So dazed like I was, till my fool head
Remembered the tone of that voice;
And the sight of the way I went on then
Would make a blind monkey rejoice.

I threw down my gun on the soft peat,
I ran to the voice that called me;
And there in a clump of sweet lilacs
My darling, sweet Maggie McGee.

SWEET MAGGIE McGEE

“Bad cess to you, Mickey O'More, let
That tongue of yours wag in your head;
No question of yours can get from me
A word of what Sweet Maggie said.”

JACQUES MALLAISE

JACQUES MALLAISE

“ Hurrah for it boys! here is Phelim —
That devil from Ireland can’t die —
An ye gather around him to listen,
He’ll tell you the dooce of a lie.”

“ Ye Scawlthon! — ye shrimplet of Erin! —
And how are ye come to this war?
Make use of your tongue and they’ll kape you
For Parliament, Mickey O’More.” —

“ Come over here boys! be that token,
A tale is in Phelim O’Toole;
’Tis the trick of him, since we were wee lads
In mischief together at school.”

“ Well, Mickey O’More, for that reason,
I’ll tell them what happened for fear
If you are not stopped of your jabbers
You’ll shame all the Irish that’s here.”

You know I was called by the general
To get him a special report,
And now there's no cause to be secret
I'll blab it to kape up your sport.

Says he to me, " Phelim, the Proossians
Most surely are tapping the wire;
I know it because our maneuvers
Are always delayed by their fire.

" And now there's an urgent occasion
For us to get word to the French,
Of doings by far too important
To chance the tapped wires from the trench.

" Take this to them over at Dixmude,
And while ye run over the way,
Examine the wire through the forest;
And travel be light of the day."

At once I set off on my gray horse,
That message hid under his tail,
Besides a false note in my pocket,
To fool them in case I should fail.

Well, while I was riding I felt sure
I saw through the leaves of a tree,
The glint of a rifle that hinted
A Proossian was looking at me.

Good angels take care of the Irish!
I dropped the false note on the ground;
And the yokel hid up in those branches,
Bamboozled, made never a sound.

No doubt he made sure 'twas important,
So devil the trigger he pulled;
While Phelim rode forward, rejoicing,
In love wit' the Proossian he fooled.

I well knew the wires had been tapped there,
Yet innocent-like I rode by;
And so, (be the trick of it) lately
That German was shot for a spy.

In due time, I got to the French camp,
And gave the right note to the general;
That tickled he was, when he read it,
He chuckled, "We'll lick 'em my men or I'll

“ Eat anny old mud in the trenches:—
Tomorrow, boys, three in the morning,
Be ready to charge wit’ the bay’net,—
Be careful, don’t give ‘em a warning.”

That word went the rounds, and our Frenchmen
Were merry as truants from school—
They made up a song with a chorus
That ended with Phelim O’Toole!

At three in the morning, away then,
They rushed up the hill for the Dutch—
God give me the French or the Irish!—
Hurrah! and a charge! hurrah!— Such

Was the craze and the fury, — they kept on,
Although they were caught in a hell
Where cannons were belching out murther
With solid ball, shrapnel and shell.

A thousand, at least, were destroyed there,
Not far from the enemy’s trench,
And the Boches, blood-lusting for slaughter,
Were shouting, “ God punish the French!”

But while they were yelling their lungs out,
A wounded man, Jacques Mallaise,
From the midst of the dead and the dying
Sang bravely the French Marseillaise!

Imagine! betwixt the two armies,
Where mangled men covered the ground,
One living and singing defiance,
While bullets were whistling around.

His voice, a rich baritone, grandly
Swelled over the discord of hate;—
The soldiers stopped fighting and listened,
Amazed as he mocked at his fate.

But when he had silenced that clamour,
He stopped in the midst of his song,
And called to the French, who were held back
And wild to retrieve their wrong:

“ Ho, comrades, my ankle is fractured,
But never you dream about me;
Shoot, comrades! shoot low at the Boches,
Have at them,— for victory!”

Good God! as they looked through the gray dawn,
And saw that the torn bodies moved,
No Frenchman could shoot at the Germans
Across the brave comrade he loved.

Not so with the long line of Proossians,
Their cruel guns rattled, spit, spats;
Swept over the field where the wounded
Were writhing like tortured rats.

And again from the din of the battle
Rang out the deep-voiced Mallaise;
But instead of the song he was cursing,
In various and horrible ways:

“ Shoot, comrades! shoot low at the Boches!
Forget me, consider me slain;
For what in the hell does it matter;
Remember the sack of Louvain!”

Oh, then it is something most awful;
The tears spurting forth from their eyes,
Ten thousand brave soldiers are sobbing,—
He, cursing, his own death defies! —



"Again from the din of the battle rang out the deep-voiced Wallaiser."

Ten thousand! a host out of bedlam,
They shoot with a frenzy to kill —
With never a word from a captain
They rush up the death-strewn hill.

And I am as crazy as they are —
We charge with a reckless wild yell;
And where a man falls there are ten more
To jump for the spot where he fell.

No son of a woman can stand up
Against that wild shock undismayed;
Like rabbits they run from their trenches,
Demoralized, whipped and afraid.

Red Slaughter runs mad in the gray dawn,
The Frenchmen are shouting “Louvain!”
And often the word, “Lusitania!”
Is echoing over the plain.—

Holy Virgin! I’m back wut the Irish,
They fight for the Glory of God!
But the Proossians are foul,— in a mix-up,
Savage,— for the lust of hot blood.

A DREAM IN THE TRENCHES

A DREAM IN THE TRENCHES

Now this is me tale; — aw now Mickey forget it,
Ye tyke! not the least tail o' me;
But the tale I'm a telling. — The weather was awful,
That nasty you never did see.

The Huns had been shelling us (snug in our trenches)
Their mortyars kept booming a wake;
And what wit' the charges and sniping around us,
No slape and no rest could I take.

Saint Pathrick (or something) took care of the Irish,
The Proossians were caught at their tricks;
They crept, in the midnight, to ketch us a-slapeing,
And gotta good fill of the Micks.

We caught them betwixt and betchune the two
ditches,
And gave them a dose of cold steel;
'Twas like a pig-sticking, me arms got that weary,
For numbness I hardly could feel.

Well, when it was over, the dead men were lively
Compared with the likes of meself;—
Begobs we were safe, till the dawn o' the morn-
ing,—
I took a big snore on me shelf.

Holy Moses! the night-mares that galloped
around me!
Till dawn of the morning was gray,
I thought I was walking through miles of deep
trenches
That twisted like snakes the wrong way.

And then I was lost in the thick of a forest,
And shells were the fruit of the trees;
They busted and killed such a plenty of Boches
I waded in blood to my knees.



"They grew from the trees and the stones."

[page 33]

I stood on an old stump, surrounded by soldiers;
They grew from the trees and the stones;
I handed the biggest a jab of my bay'net,
I felt it go grit in his bones.

The bay'net stuck in him; I tried to unloose it,
To get at the rest of my foes;
It would not come out, and I could not unhand it,
Be dad! to the gun I was froze.—

Now Mickey quit winkin' and japein' that foolish,
Suppose ye were in such a fix;
Ye'd call it great sport, and the Proossians around
you?
I say, like the Huns, "aber nix."

" 'Tis the devil's own tale ye are after the telling,
Remember this, Phelim O'Toole,
Ye said ye were froze to the holt of your musket,
Explain, if ye're not a big fool."

" Aw Mickey! I saw in the light of me drameing,
And all was too dark for to see;
But now, an ye listen, I'll tell you what happened
When sunlight was shining on me.

“ Of course, what I’m after the telling was
nightmares

But now I’m awake in me tale,
And when I’m awake I’m that wonderful truth-
ful,—
A lie! whist, to tell it I’d fail.” —

Now when I awoke, in the midst of me right mind,
On me left I was lying stretched out;
And the Huns be the hundred were scattered
around me;
Stark dead they were litthered about.

And their blood! ’twas a lake of it, frozen and
brittle,
And there I was held in that ice;
And the musket that filled Mickey’s head with a
wonder,
Was held in me grip like a vice.

And from it red icicles shone in the sunlight,
Belave it or not, I don’t care;
But the worst of it was, I was held like a prisoner,
And no one could pull me from there.

A DREAM IN THE TRENCHES

'Twas a sight for the Irish! alive as the devil,
And held by a Proossian that's dead!—
“ Whist! Phelim O'Toole, 'tis a taffy you give us,
There's nothing but lies in your head.”—

“ Now Mickey, what for do ye so interrupt me,
In coorse I got out of me fix;
Just wait a bit, faith, and ye'll have to belave me,
Both you and the rest of the Micks.”—

A Parlevoo came to the rescue of Erin —
He grabbed up some fresh dinnymite,—
He placed it, and parlevoood, begged of me
pardon,—
And touched it off, biff!— out of sight

Sails I in the air like a scout on an airship!—
Comes I to me camp, to me friends!—
Faith, Mickey O'More, be the saints, I have
proved it;
The tail of me narrative ends.

**JOHN BROWN, AFRICAN, OF THE
FOREIGN LEGION**

JOHN BROWN, AFRICAN, OF THE FOREIGN LEGION

Now whaffoh, Miss Maggie, you laffin,
Kase why, of dat powaful chahm?
A white-graveyard-rabbit's left hind foot
Will suttelen keep you from hahm.

Mah friend, Mistah Phelim, can prove it—
Ah followed him straight up the hill—
He saw how the shells couldn't hit me—
Some magic! in such a big mill!

“But John, you forget the ‘Jack Johnson’ *
That wounded you there in the back;
Perhaps there’s a plenty of magic,
A rabbit’s left hind foot may lack.”

Why lawzey, Miss Maggie, me wounded?
And me in mah bed, paralyzed!—
Ah thought all mah troubles was ovah
And wobbled around and capsized.

* The soldiers call large shells “Jack Johnsons.”

But only for this little hind foot—
It saved me and Phelim O'Toole—
That big shell had hustled our shadows
To sizzle where wintah's not cool.

“I wish you would tell me about it;”
Chimed in little Maggie McGee,
“Strange is it a man of your colour
From Boston, and over the sea;

“For why should you leave that great country,
Where even the naygurs get rich,
A-picking gold off of the mountains,
Or cotton and prayties and sich.

“For why did you come to this bad war,
Where Kaisers are swimming in blood,
And leave your great mansions of marble,
To wallow in trenches of mud.”

Why lawzey, Miss Maggie, quoth John Brown,
Ah guess Ah most always might have
Qu-ossity mo' than right judgment;—
It was not because Ah was brave;

But some of mah friends had war-fevah,
And made up a “legion” to fight
For France, and they needed a cook, so
Ah joined them account of their plight.

And so Ah have followed this ahmy,
And fed them and fought for them too,
And Ah would be dead like the othahs
Except fo’ mah little hoo-doo.

’Twas Sattaday mawnin’, we stahted
To chahge like the Germans,—you know,
Bunched up in a reg’lah fo’mation—
And that worried all of us—so,

Ah said kind of loud, with intention
The captain would heah what Ah said,
“Why doan’ that man tell us to spread out
Befo’ we gets laid out fo’ dead?”

He didn’t pay no least attention—
Whaffoh should he listen to me?—
We went that-a-way till the captain
Got ready a-plenty, says he,

“ Spread out and to kuvvah, heads down boys”—
He had a good reason by that—
Our heads a-most natchally sag down—
Ah dodge like a rabbit or cat.

And a-shootin’ away from the hill-top
An ahsenal, robbed of its guns,
Keeps pumpin’ all kinds of fired bullets,
Invented by bahberous Huns.

We stops, and we rush, and again rush,
We gets to the top of the hill;
The Germans get skeered and bend backwahd;
Ah ’spicion they sho’ got their fill.

But chasing them we got surrounded,
Machine guns in front and around.
And shells in the middle a-bustin’—
Ah thought Ah was heavenly bound.

They tole us to lay on our stummicks,
To dodge their machinery pills;—
You simply cain’t duck them love-tokens,
No mo’ than your grocery bills.

And while Ah was huggin' the ground close,
 Jack Johnson slid ovah mah back;
“O Lawdy,” Ah says to mahself, sir,
 “Ah’m smashed lak a railroad track.

“ Ah guess Ah’m a-earnin’ mah wages,
 About a whole penny a day,
But somehow the future looks gloomy
 And dahk if Ah keeps dis-a-way.”

“ How many days lasted that battle?”
 Astonished, said Maggie McGee;—
“ Why just a small po’tion of one day,
 And that was enough to hold me.”

“ And who went with you besides Phelim?”
 Said Maggie, perhaps with some pride:
He answered, “ They kept me too busy,
 But Phelim was close at mah side.”

While Maggie was dreaming of glory,
 Another nurse came with his food;
“ Oh lawzey, jes’ whiff at the bacon,
 Ah tell you it sho’ly am good.

“ If Joffrey would listen to mah plan,
 This wah would not last half a day;
Ah’d set out a million of rashahs,
 All crispy and hot dis-a-way;

“ And scattah them out on the trenches —
 As soon as the Huns got a smell
They’d jump from their holes and surrendah —
 Too glad to escape from their — well,

“ That minds me again of mah good luck,
 Account of mah rabbit-foot chahm;
Fo’ why does Ah know it’s the rabbit? —
 Why heah Ah is cuddled from hahm.”

“ But where then is Phelim,” said Maggie,
 “ Ah, tell me for better or worse —
’Tis me that came over from Ireland,
 In case he might need for a nurse.”

“ And do you know Phelim, Miss Maggie?
 They found him nigh dead on that hill,
And toted him, captive to Belgium —
 Perhaps he is up there still.”

JOHN BROWN, AFRICAN

“ My Phelim among those blood-robbers?
Oh, tell me how may I go there!
Thank God for this badge of the Red Cross,
A passport that's good everywhere.”

EDITH CAVELL AND MAGGIE
McGEE

EDITH CAVELL AND MAGGIE
McGEE

EDITH CAVELL AND MAGGIE McGEE

“Come out with it, Mickey, and tell us
What happened when Maggie McGee
Donated her tongue to Von Bissing —
Come Mickey, we’re waiting on ye.”

And is it meself ye are teasing?
Me, puffing a snipe and no light? —
Me wind-pipe’s that dry, — I’m a desert;
I’ll bark it, not spake, if I try it. —

Well then — gloog-loog-loog! I feel better —
And now, — poof, poof, poof — a grand stogie;
So kind are ye, I will endayvour
To show up Von Bissing. — That rogue! he

Had already signed the death-warrant
Of Edith Cavell, when a sly
Ould fox of a German said, “Maggie
For helping Miss Edith should die.”

And troth was it so? She had helped me,
And others, to fade from their clutches;—
No matter,—to murther a good nurse
Is nobody's right but the Deutchess.

They slaughtered Miss Cavell that same night.—
Von Bissing the next morning gave
To each of his henchmen a tin cross—
A sooveneer, “fit for the brave.”

And while that ould mummy still felt good,
He sent for sweet Maggie McGee,
Determined to make her confess all,
Before he would let her go free.

“So Meggie,” said he, “Yust inform me
How you und Miss Kevell us fool;
A child you was, so I not hurt you—
So young, yet, und yust out of school.”

Then Maggie looked daggers and scorned him;
“Is it me, ye would like to cajole?
A serpent ye are, I advise you,
Go wriggle away to your hole.”

A big-fisted soldier then caught her,
And, shaking her, hissed in her ear,
“How dare you insult, yet, his highness?
Good reason I gif you to fear.”

A classic performance that started:—
As when the wild-cat, in attack,
Encounters a wolf:— Her eyes blazing,
She crouches — she arches her back —

And, swift as a ball to the wicket,
Leaps straight at the neck of her foe;—
She yells, and she scratches and bites him,
Escapes his great teeth, till a blow

Of her claws rips a gash in his white throat; —
So, Maggie, her eyes in a blaze,
Dug deep with the nails of her fingers
Red lines on the German’s face:

She grabbed at his hair with her two hands,
Jerked out a big hank by the roots;
And biting and scratching and yelling,
Kicked out with her French-heeled boots.

Compared with that little she-tiger,
That mountain of strength was no use;
A map of ould Ireland his face was,
When she had repaid his abuse.

That over, she threw at ould Bissing
A bottle or two of his beer;
Books, papers and weights, swords, pistols,
Just anything handy or near;

Kicked over the chairs, broke a mirrour,
And screeching and yelling blue murther,
Began to tear off a few garments —
Old Bissing afraid of, — what further?

Ran out of the room in a panic,
And managed to call, in his fright,
An army or so, “ to the rescue,”
Who thinking a turrible fight, —

Perhaps a surprise — came a-running
To rescue that cold-blooded Nero;
By which, I’ll record to the whole world,
They certainly saved a great hero.

By cannons, guns, sabres and brave deeds,
They captured sweet Maggie McGee—
Great glory they won—I have heard tell
The mix-up was awful to see.

A danger she was to their Impire,
They had to confine her in jail;—
The logical Baron Von Bissing
Wrote William a luminous tale.—

So back comes a note from Got-William
Promoting that vigilant boss,
And tons of ould junk in small pieces,
Profaning the shape of the cross.

Now, everything ready for Maggie,
Ould Bissing made up a report
To fool the dense world with a story,
How Maggie was tried in fair court;

But while he was scheming that wild tale,
The world gave a palpable hint
About the sly murther of women
By Kaisers conceited of flint.

That hard was the hint it would break through
The hide of a rhinoceros;
Small doubt of it, since the Got-Kaiser,
To prove that he loved the Red Cross,

Gave orders to pardon all nurses,
By which the blame went to Von Bissing,
The glory, as always, to William
Whom Satan not long will be missing.

And just for that reason sweet Maggie
Remained there, a Red Cross Nurse;
And she it was saved our brave Phelim —
Thank Heaven! it might have been worse.

THE GLORY OF PHELIM O'TOOLE

THE GLORY OF PHELIM O'TOOLE

Dear Daddie, I take up my pencil
To tell you the news of the day—
How I wish the sad war was all over,
And me in Killala Bay!

It is dreadful to be with these poor men,
That once were so strong and so brave,
Now mangled and torn;— it were better
To put them at rest in the grave.

O Father! how can I but tell it:
Our Phelim O'Toole,— is not — dead —
But wounded, he suffers that dreadful,—
I write while I watch by his bed.

They brought him here, maimed and delirious, —
He doesn't know I am his nurse;
And the doctor has said we will lose him,
If ever his fever gets worse.

Near dead am I watching the nights through,
With never a minute of sleep;
Small use have I now for these sad eyes,
Excepting to watch and to weep.

And Mickey O'More it was brought him,—
Ye mind him, that small freckled lad?
His blue eyes of laughter? God bless him!—
He took on for Phelim so bad.

He told me how Phelim got hurted,
The glory he did in that war:
I'll tell it ye here on this paper,
Be the language of Mickey O'More:—

Says Mickey, “ Ah Maggie, I seen him
In the hot of it, time and again!
I'll never forget in that wild charge
So grand was he, leading his men. —

“ You see, it was this way, the Boches
Outnumbered us twenty to one,
And now they had planned a great effort,
To whip us and force us to run.

“For one of them spied out our trouble,—
 What was it? Our powder was low!—
A cartridge! ’twas worth a goold guinea!—
 Our gun-fire was feeble and slow.

“Of course, if we once got to running,
 They’d follow with bay’net and shot;
And few of the English and Irish
 Would ever return from that spot.

“The General (wise to their tactics)
 Gave orders to Phelim O’Toole;
Says he, ‘It is often the best plan
 For wise men to hazard the fool;

“‘Get out your brigade of brave Irish
 And charge up that hill, on the right—
The Proossians will argue we done it
 To bring on a general fight;

“‘By which they will guess re-enforcements, —
 Perhaps a reserve in the rear,—
And that will delay their maneuvers,
 Until we can get out of here.

“ ‘ Stick to it, my lad, till you scare them;
Destroy all the guns that you can:
Come back when we feint to support you—
God help you, my brave Irish man.’

“ ‘ Come back,’ says I, ‘ Sure with the angels!’
But Phelim swore, ‘ Devils in pitch!
Come on my boys! Charge! To the Dutchmen!
Ho! Follow me! Out of the ditch!’

“ Those divils from Ireland! God bless them!
They follow him up to the hill,
Flat down on their bellies they’re crawling—
On! upward! they struggle until

“ The long line of blood that’s behind them
Gives pause to the bravest man there;—
But, just as they waver, up Phelim
Jumps, swinging his gun in the air;

“ A target for thousands of Boches,
He stands on the top of a stone,
And shouts like a god in that wild din,
‘ Come on, boys! I charge ’em alone! ’



"Up Phelim jumps, swinging his gun in the air."

[page 60]

“Oh then, you can see a strange glitter
A-light in the eyes of his men;
No torment of grim death can stop them —
They follow their leader again.”

O Daddy! I knew what was coming —
Your Maggie fell down in a swoon;
And Mickey took on like a wild man,
For fright of it — luckily, soon,

I came to myself, but my head swam;
A dizzy feel blinded my eyes;
And, while I was foolish, I moaned out,
“Don’t tell it me! tell me no lies!”

What for did I get to my right mind?
’Tis sorrow we love here, not mirth;
We pluck the sweet flower from the green stem,
Smile on it, and crush it to earth.—

“O Mickey, o’chone, ye must tell it! —
Hush Mickey, ye’ll murther me dead! ”
And so I wailed under my sorrow,
Too wild-like to know what I said.

And when I was worn out with weeping,
Again, I could listen to him;
And oh, what he told of those Germans!
Bed cess to the nation of them.—

But guess now, dear Father, what happened?
While writing you this, by his bed,
And while I was teeming with anger,
He opened his eyes, and he said:

“ What dream is this? is it a vision?
Or is it a dear ghost I see?
I thought I was kilt on that steep hill;
God help me! that’s Maggie McGee!

“ Are you, too, my colleen, a spirit?
Your sweet life put out in that war?
Dear God! must they slaughter such children,
To humour that crazed Emperor?”

His words were that strange, but his clear eyes
With nothing of madness shone;
And when I leaned over and kissed him,
I knew that his fever had gone.

THE GLORY OF PHELIM O'TOOLE

That good news broke into the sad tale
 Our poor little Mickey had told.—
And he's to the war, such a small man,
 With his big heart of purified gold.

And, O my dear Father! the doctor
 Assures me that Phelim will live;
And when he gets well we will come back,—
 And your little Maggie will give

The strength of her two arms to Phelim,—
 My darling, brave, one-armed boy!—
And do ye remember that cottage
 That's close by the banks of the Moy?

HANS WINKELMANN

HANS WINKELMANN

Hans Vinkelmann was yust thot way,
He always dit wot he was tolt;
By witch thot night he met his dett,
Und it was awful colt.

You see, December it was then,
Way off by Warsaw mit the Poles,
All kinds of plizzards plew, und we
Kept warm by digging holes.

So Hans was digging, like so me,
Venn oop the kepting comes, mit shout,
“Hans Vinkelmann!” und Hans says, “Here!”
“Vell then, thot trench get out;

“Und come by me, we need a man
Off yonder by thot picket line;
You must not leef mitout my wort,—
Relief will be at nine.”

Vell venn a sentry vent the rount,
Perhaps by eight o'clock, or so,
He met poor Hans half dett mit colt,
Und standing in the snow;

Und Hans, he said, " My comrade Yake,
I feel mit shivers, colt as ice,
I wish you giff the kepting this
For Yennie if I dies."

So Yake comes pack und tells it all —
Up yoomped the kepting, und he swore,
" Py Tamm! if he is scairt of colt,
Vot vill he do in vore?"

Yust then a thousand Rooshians yelt,
Like hell-fire tyefulls, or wot not;
Und wile we fought to safe our lifes,
Poor Hans was all forgot.

The other sentries hurried in,
Und choined us mit the Rooshian fight;
I tell you wot, we licked 'em goot,
Und kept it oop all night.

Vell howso thot, venn morning comes,
We looks arount und counts our men;
The kepting calls our names, und calls,
“Hans Vinkelmann!” again.

No answer comes, und ware is Hans?
He is not on the ploody grount;
Und any ware we looks for him,
No sign of him is fount.

But Yakey was a cunning Yew,
Und said, “Py Yim, I bet I know,
Hans Vinkelmann is keeping guart,
Und standing in the snow!”

Vee didn’t vait for leef at all—
The morning light was werry dim,
But pretty soon we fount poor Hans,
Or wot was left of him.

We fount two dett wolfs on the snow,
A gun, some pones, a uniform;
Goot Gott! this Rooshian vore is colt,—
Perhaps, yet, Hans is warm.

A BELGIAN HERO

A BELGIAN HERO

The drums were rolling the reveille,
But the Belgian dozed in his trench;
A Turco yelled in his ear, “Away,
The Huns are whipping the French.”

The Turco’s shout was like the last trump,
And our soldier jumped to his feet —
“Lead on,” he cried, and brandished his gun —
“A charge boys, never defeat!”

The Turco grinned, his white teeth shone,
The French around him guffahed; —
Our Belgian hero, clutched in a dream,
Waved cap in the air, — and hurrahed.

He flourished his gun, and with the butt end
Laid the Turco flat on the ground;
And while he shouted, “A-bas le Boche!”
King Albert happened around.

“ What ails you, my man? ” the brave king said,
And our wild-eyed hero replied,
“ In that deep ditch my dear wife’s corpse,
And her infant dead at her side. —

“ My God, I cannot begin to tell
The horrors I saw that night —
Those brutes caught my wife and our dear child
And slaughtered them in my sight.

“ And that was not all; I stood there bound,
To sharpen their brutal fun;
And while I raved my captor laughed
And prodded me with his gun.

“ Oh, see you not there in that foul ditch,
That beautiful woman lies?
That poor, poor clay is my dear wife,
And Death looks up from her eyes.”

“ Enough, my good man,” the brave king said,
“ ‘Tis not the end of this war.”
And the laughter was hushed, and stern and grim
Were they who had laughed before.

A BELGIAN HERO

Then up from the ground the Turco rose,
Majestic in six foot three;
He swore a great oath as dark as himself,
And his eyes were as green as the sea.

Two strides — he stood by the grief-struck man,
Who had nearly broken his head,
And standing there, like a bronze statue,
Saluted the king and said:

“Together we fight, my comrade he,
We give-a the Boches hell.” —
As he walked away with a panther’s step,
You could see the great muscles swell.

Hot coffee was passed along the ranks,
And the soldiers gave a cheer;
Before they could eat the cannons roared,
As would make the arch-devil fear.

Destruction rained from the east and the west,
Hot sheets of flame shot out,
And a multitude of German lungs
Broke forth in a mighty shout.

An order was given to charge the guns,
And "Vive la France" went the round—
O Christ! what a glorious sight to see
Those men on the shot-swept ground!

Ahead of the line our Belgian ran,
A frenzy rolled in his eye;
Around him they fell but his life was charmed,
He had no reason to die.

Now at them! his vengeance three-fold fierce,
He lunged in reckless hate;
His bayonet dripped with Teuton blood;
It seemed he could play with fate.

And always beside him the Turco fought,
Superb in his six foot three;
To right, to left, he guarded his friend,—
Too blind in his rage to see.

A rout, a rout! the German host
Scattered like chaff on the plain;—
But the French fell back, for the multitude
Of foes that rallied again.

A BELGIAN HERO

And as they retreated our Belgian fell;
He would not take the alarm;
But the Turco gently picked him up,
And tucked him under his arm.

He cocked a bright plume above his right ear;
He swaggered as if on parade;
The petrified Germans halted pursuit,
Astonished, not whipped or afraid.

No halo of mist, as the poets tell,
Nor angel nor saint appeared,
But the rattle of arms was stopped a while,
As the soldiers shouted and cheered.

'Twas only a small man crazed with wrong,
Whose vengeance caused the deed;
'Twas only a dark man reckless of life,
When a friend of his had need.

With never a look back he crossed that field,
And went where the good king stood,
And laid on the ground, with never a word,
The mangled man covered with blood.

SONGS OF A RED CROSS NURSE

King Albert knelt to the shattered form,
And felt his pulse with care,
And a holy dew welled in his eyes
When he knew that life was there.

And when he got up he said a few words
That a thousand thoughts revealed —
“The man is not dead, the war is not done,
There’s a God of the battle field.”

ENTRENCHED ON THE AISNE

ENTRENCHED ON THE AISNE

The Fifth Huzzars were ordered out
To labour at the trenches,
Along the Aisne a blinding rain
Came down in sheets and drenches.

A young lieutenant took a spade,
And cast away his sabre,
“My lads,” he said “dig up a clod,—
And glory be to labour.

“But while I dig a word to you,
Old man beside my elbow,
When I enrolled I left a girl
Who thought I was a swell beau:

“Laugh not, old man, for I can talk;
In moonlight like another;
But now, I want to talk to you
As if you were my brother.”

With this he took a picture out
And flashed it at the old man;
“She’s sweeter than the smile you see,
And worth her weight in gold, man.”

“Young man,” he said, “I’m not so old,
But I might be her father;
I have a picture I might show,
If it were not a bother.”

And all the while they bantered thus,
The shells were bursting ’round them,
And the downpour in the trenches ran,
Small wonder if it drowned them.

No doubt the youth was edging up
To tell a sober story,
A message for the girl if he
Should fall in trenches gory.

The Germans now had got the range,
Their cannonade was furious;
“I say, old man, the way those shells
Go skyting round is curious.”

ENTRENCHED ON THE AISNE

And at the word a bursting shell,
Filled with a hellish mixture,
Tore from its roots the poor lad's arm
That held the sweetheart's picture.

Another dreadful fragment struck
The old man on the forehead —
And, just to use plain English now,
The mess was something horrid.

And there they lay with glassy eyes
Until the night was starry,
Sad magnets for the birds of prey
That hunt their mangled quarry.

The youth's torn limb not far from him,
Still clutched the dear love-token;
The old man had a duplicate,
Though stained with blood and broken.

THE CALL OF THE CROWS

THE CALL OF THE CROWS

1.

A cold mist was silently falling,
One morning not far from the Marne,
On a field where a battered old barn
Was haunted by garrulous crows—
Insistent — unceasingly calling —
Persistent as everyone knows; —
But always more ghostly and weird
The silence increased with their calling! —
And ever more ghastly appeared
The mist as a mystery falling,
Unholy, unearthly, appalling.

2.

A heavy white fog — from the clouds —
Was held in that mist — God wist! —
Or was it the ravelling shrouds
Of spirits like shadows uprist?
Of shadowy phantoms around
Sad bodies on meadow and mound,
All sodden and rotten, forgotten,
Where glory swept over the ground?

3.

So many they were that not any
Could rise through the mist o'er the plain,
But gathered as fog where the fenny
Reeds wept in the reek and the rain.—
So many the multitudes slain,
The bravest endeavour might never
A single soul liberty gain.—
Alas, to be reeking forever;
In misty confusion to lie on
Each other, forgotten, forlorn;
Sad spirits, unbodied, to sigh on
That heavy-held fog of the morn.

4.

And so the black crow, the foul vulture,
That hovers or covers that field —
Ah pity the peasant shall culture
That field for a bountiful yield!—
The crow and the vulture sepulture
Not only the flesh that is rent,
But even the air they are breathing,
The misty air winnowed with wings,—
All seething with spirit-forms pent!—

THE CALL OF THE CROWS

The air they are breathing is seething
With many a phantom that clings
To the carrion crow or the vulture,
From misty winds winnowed with wings.

5.

Oh hark to the call of the crows!
O'er the field by the battered old barn,
The battle-scarred barn where the Marne
In reedy weeds wandering flows!
Oh hear you not weeping and wailing,
An undertone wafted from there
By the birds that are calling and sailing,
On sluggard wings over that air —
An undertone, always persistent,
In the call of the haunted black crows,
Heard plainly, distinct and insistent,
In the call of the garrulous crows?

SEND HIM A SMILE—

SEND HIM A SMILE —

O mothers and sisters and sweethearts,
And all who are ready for tears,
Because of the lad who has offered his all,
Let us hide our despair and our fears; —
Let us knit, let us work for his comfort, —
Our money, our labour is free, —
But, better than this, because of our love,
Send a smile to him over the sea.

For he will encourage his comrades,
By singing the songs of the day;
With the boys over there he will sing the home
songs
To chase a sad moment away:
But when that excitement is over
He will ask, “Is she thinking of me?”
Ah yes! but instead of our sighs, — every one,
Send a smile to him over the sea.

HIS LAST WORDS—

HIS LAST WORDS —

Voices that I cannot hear,
Breathed as love might sigh,
Smiles I cannot see, caressing,
Charm me — pass me by:

Not the dear friends I have known,
Imaged in my brain,
Not remembered smiles and voices,
Brought to life again;—

Not disordered dreams that rise
From the formless air,
Nor the angels of my childhood,
When I knelt in prayer —

Ah! sweet nurse, 'tis you,—stoop down,
For the night grows dark —
I thought it was my mother —
Did you hear that? — Hark!

WHO SHALL FORGIVE? -

WHO SHALL FORGIVE? —

Battalions of Germany, — myriads arrayed, —
With savage hate rushed from the north to invade

The fertile sweet vallies, the lily-starred vales,
Where lovely maids rival the loved nightingales.

And the glint of their swords, and the gleam of
their guns,

Was the glory of God to the brutalized Huns;
But His temples and altars they leveled to dust,
And the shriek of despair was the life of their lust.

The shout of their triumph, the boast of their king,
High heaven assaulted as vultures a-wing;
But why should they reck on the wrath of the
Lord? —

The glut of their glory achieved by the sword! —

The Spirit of God breathed over the world,
And far to the west a proud banner unfurled;
And the Army of Liberty crossed the wide sea,
That woman might worship and man might be free.

WHO SHALL FORGIVE?

And the hosts of the Huns are dismayed and
perplexed,
Their blasphemous king in his vaunting is vexed;
For where is the pity for those who had none,
And who shall forgive what the dastard has
done? —

Their bodies are strewn by the Marne on the plain
Where the hordes of Attila were routed and slain;
And the fate of the past that dishonoured the Huns
Is the doom of defeated, degenerate sons.



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